

Republic of Korea - Country Report on Terrorism 2012

May 30, 2013

REPUBLIC OF KOREA (SOUTH KOREA)

Overview: While the Republic of Korea has no active counterterrorism cases, it continued to take terrorism seriously and cooperated with U.S. counterterrorism efforts. Information sharing through formal and informal channels has been strong and responses to requests for information positive. The 18th Republic of Korea National Assembly session expired on May 28, without passing the Counter-Terror Prevention Act bill. First proposed in late 2001 shortly after September 11 by the 16th National Assembly, the bill has faced consistent opposition from civic groups and the National Human Rights Committee.

Legislation, Law Enforcement, and Border Security: The Republic of Korea has met the requirements for information sharing under the Visa Waiver Program. In January, the Republic of Korea began collecting the biometric data of foreign nationals aged 17 and over at ports of entry. Through the Preventing and Combating Serious Crime agreement, U.S. law enforcement will be able to use this biometric data to identify terrorists and criminals and share relevant information.

Countering Terrorist Finance: The Republic of Korea is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, a FATF-style regional body. In February, the National Assembly approved an amendment to the Financial Transaction Reports Act imposing stricter penalties on financial institutions that violate reporting requirements, which the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) had submitted in December 2010. On June 13, 2012, the FIU submitted a separate bill amending the Financial Transaction Reports Act to abolish the suspicious transaction report threshold. The bill was submitted to the National Assembly in November. To meet the global standard, the FIU revised the Enforcement Decree of the Prohibition of Financing for Offenses of Public Intimidation Act in September. The Republic of Korea actively cooperated with authorized investigations involving or initiated by international organizations, and shared the records or related information with foreign authorities. In this regard, the FIU has signed Memoranda of Understanding for cooperation with 48 foreign authorities and added the U.S. Financial Crime Enforcement Network (FINCEN) into its global network on June 20. For further information on money laundering and financial crimes, we refer you to the 2013

International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Volume 2, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes: <http://www.state.gov/j/inl/rls/nrcrpt/index.htm>.

Regional and International Cooperation: South Korea is a member of the UN, APEC, ASEAN+3, East Asia Summit, Asia-Europe Meeting, Asia Cooperation Dialogue, Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation, OECD, G-20, and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia. It is also a partner country of the OSCE and NATO.

On March 26-27, the Republic of Korea hosted the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul; combating nuclear terrorism was a significant conference component. In September in Seoul, the South Korean government hosted the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Seminar on Confidence Building Measures in Cyberspace, under the endorsement of the ARF Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime Inter-Sessional Meeting.

The Republic of Korea government continued to help developing countries build law enforcement capacities through bilateral and regional channels such as the ASEAN+3 Ministerial Meetings on Transnational Crimes. In 2012, the Republic of Korean government organized 21 training courses covering topics such as forensic science investigation, crime prevention, and cyber crime investigation, and invited 342 government officers from developing countries to participate.

In 2012, the Korean government held bilateral consultations on counterterrorism with Japan, China, Russia, Brazil, Mexico, and India.

In February, the Korean National Police Agency partnered with the International Tactical Officers Training Association to co-host the 2012 Evolution Counterterrorism Conference, with a dual theme of “Command and Leadership” and “Counterterrorism Operations.”